

## Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 ABU DH 02300 251117Z

10  
ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 OMB-01

/058 W

----- 115792

R 240625Z AUG 76  
FM AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4831

C O N F I D E N T I A L ABU DHABI 2300

E.O. 11652: GDS  
TAGS: PINT, TC  
SUBJECT: UAE RULERS COMMENT ON UAE INTERNAL AFFAIRS

1. DURING MY TRIP TO NORTHERN EMIRATES TO SAY GOOD-BYE TO SHAIKHS SAQR, SULTAN, AND RASHED, I FOUND THESE GENTLEMEN IN RELAXED FRAME OF MIND BUT ALSO PREPARED TO BE VERY VOLUABLE ON SUBJECT, ONCE OPENED, OF UAE'S CURRENT INTERNAL PROBLEMS.

2. NONE OF THREE RULERS WERE INCLINED TO TAKE SHAIKH ZAYED'S THREAT TO STEP DOWN TOO SERIOUSLY, AND ALL SEEMED TO BELIEVE HE WOULD BE PERSUADED TO STAY ON FOR ANOTHER FIVE-YEAR TERM. ALL THREE WERE ALSO CRITICAL OF ZAYED'S METHOD OF TAKING THIS STEP, I.E., BY FIRST BROACHING IT TO FOREIGN JOURNALIST. SAQR SAID PROPER THING FOR ZAYED TO HAVE DONE WAS TO MAKE HIS INTENTION KNOWN IN SUPREME COUNCIL. V SO RULERS COULD TALK ABOUT IT. SAQR WAS SYMPATHETIC WITH REASONS FOR ZAYED FEELING FED UP WITH WAYTHINGS HAD GONE THIS PAST YEAR, BUT HE THEN WENT ON TO CHRONICAL SINS OF OMISSION AND COMMISSION ON PART OF ABU DHABI MANAGEMENT OF FEDERAL AFFAIRS THAT MADE IT CLEAR HE THOUGHT ZAYED HAS BROUGHT AT LEAST HALF OF THESE TROUBLES UPON HIMSELF. AMONG SAQR'S COMPLAINTS: SUPREME COUNCIL DOESN'T MEET REGULARLY AND WHEN IT DOES IT FREQUENTLY FAILS TO DISCUSS THE IMPORTANT MATTERS; FEDERAL MINISTRIES HAVE NO EFFECTIVE  
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 ABU DH 02300 251117Z

POWER--WHEN ONE WANTS TO GET SOMETHING DONE IN ABU

DHABI ONE IS ALWAYS DIRECTED TO ZAYED'S DIWAN; NEW FEDERAL CAPITAL SHOULD BE CREATED "TO GET AWAY FROM ALL THOSE ABU DHABI SHAIKHS." WHEN I QUESTIONED SAQR AS TO WHETHER HE REALLY THOUGHT CREATING NEW CAPITAL WOULD SOLVE ANY OF UNDERLYING PROBLEMS HE SAID, "I SUPPOSE NOT, BUT ISN'T THAT A BETTER WAY OF SPENDING OUR MONEY THAN GIVING IT AWAY TO A LOT OF FOREIGNERS?"

3. SHAIKH SULTAN DESCRIBED PROCEEDINGS OF LAST SUPREME COUNCIL MEETING IN TERMS OF RASHED BEING ODD MAN OUT, AND UNNECESSARILY OFFENSIVE TO ZAYED IN MANNER IN WHICH HE FLATLY REFUSED EVEN TO DISCUSS NEW CONSTITUTION. OTHER RULERS INCLUDING HIMSELF FOUND MUCH THEY DID NOT LIKE IN DRAFT SUBMITTED BY ZAYED'S EXPERTS, BUT THEY WERE AT LEAST PREPARED TO DISCUSS CHANGES. SULTAN SAID UAE PUBLIC WAS NOW EXPECTING NEW CONSTITUTION, AND IF RULERS DID NOT COME UP WITH SOMETHING, IT COULD PLACE THEM ON POOR FOOTING WITH THEIR PEOPLE. SHAIKH SULTAN SAID THAT DURING HIS SUMMER VACATION IN ENGLAND HE HAD HAD MEETING OF SHARJAH STUDENTS THERE AND HE HIMSELF HAD BEEN SURPRISED AT WARMTH OF THEIR ATTACK ON SHAIKH RASHED FOR "OBSTRUCTING" FEDERAL UNITY. SULTAN SAID TROUBLE WITH RASHED IS HE DOESN'T PAY ACP ATTENTION TO YOUNG PEOPLE AND DOESN'T REALIZE THEY ARE RETURNING BY THOUSANDS EACH YEAR AND WILL SOON BECOME POLITICAL FORCE IN UAE. HE INDICATED RULERS AND OTHERS ARE TRYING TO BRING PRESSURE ON RASHED TO ADOPT MORE FORTHCOMING POSITION ON QUESTION OF CONSTITUTION.

4. WHEN THIS INEVITABLE SUBJECT CAME UP IN MY CALL ON SHAIKH RASHED NEXT DAY, HE TREATED ME TO HIS USUAL LECTURE ON JUST HOW BAD THINGS ARE IN ABU DHABI. THIS IS NOW A SET PERFORMANCE FOR RASHED BY WHICH HE HOPES TO DISARM ANYONE WHO INTENDS TO BADGER HIM ABOUT FEDERATION. HE DOES IT WITH SUCH A FUND OF AMUSING ANECDOTES ABOUT VARIOUS FUMBLES IN THE CAPITAL CITY THAT ONE CANNOT HELP LAUGHING WITH HIM. I HEARD HIM OUT AS USUAL, BUT THEN I ASKED HIS PERMISSION TO SPEAK IN A PERSONAL VEIN, AS A FRIEND OF HIS AND OF HIS NATION, ON THE OCCASION OF MY DEPARTURE. I SAID ALL GOVERNMENTS

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 ABU DH 02300 251117Z

FACED PROBLEM OF ADJUSTING ADEQUATELY IN BOTH THEIR REAL CHARACTER AND THEIR IMAGE TO KEEP PACE WITH

MODERN TIMES. MY OWN GOVERNMENT WANTED TO SEE GOVERNMENTAL SYSTEM OF UAE SURVIVE, BUT TO DO SO IT WOULD HAVE TO MAKE TIMELY ADJUSTMENTS TO PRESENT-DAY CONDITIONS. I

HOPED HE WOULD FORGIVE MY BLUNTNESS, BUT THERE WERE NOT MANY GOVERNMENTS LEFT IN WORLD WHICH HAD NO PUBLIC ACCOUNTING FOR ITS NATIONAL ACCOUNTS. STANDING ON THIER OWN, THE

SHAIKHS AND THEIR SYSTEM WERE VULNERABLE; BEST PROTECTION LAY IN WRAPPING SHAIKHLY SYSTEM WITHIN CONTEXT OF EVOLVING FEDERATION WHICH REFLECTED MODERN VALUES AND DISSARMED PUBLIC OPINION BEFORE IT TURNED INTO WRATH AND APPEARED ON SHAIKHS DOORSTEP. I HAD LISTENED CAREFULLY TO HIS STATEMENTS ABOUT WHAT WAS WRONG WITH ABU DHABI BUT TO BE HONEST FELT THAT MUCH OF IT WAS BESIDE THE BASIC POINT. THERE WERE PLENTY OF FOREIGNERS IN ABU DHABI BUT I HAD OBSERVED SCENE CLOSELY AND DID NOT REALLY THINK SHAIKH ZAYED AND HIS LIEUTENANTS WERE UNDER THEIR INFLUENCE. MISTAKES BEING MADE IN ABU DHABI WERE OF ABU DHABI'S OWN MAKING AND FEW OF THEM APPEARED TO ME TO BE IRREMEDIABLE. WHAT SHAIKH ZAYED NEED WAS LESS CRITICISM FROM AFAR BUT MORE HELP, WHICH COULD AND SHOULD BE OFFERED ON TERMS THAT WERE QUITE TOUGH IN DEMANDING THINGS SHAIKH RASHED AND OTHERS BELIEVED WOULD BE BEST FOR FEDERATION. I TOLD RASHED I THOUGHT IT WAS IN HIS OWN INTEREST TO MAKE FEDERATION A GOING CONCERN, BUT IT WAS UNFAIR TO EXPECT ZAYED TO BEAR ENTIRE BURDEN OF THIS.

5. SHAIKH RASHED HEARD ME OUT AND SAID WITH A LAUGH AT THE END THAT HE DIDN'T MIND BLUNT TALK. I SAID I WAS RELIEVED TO HEAR IT. HE DID NOT MAKE MUCH COMMENT BUT IN PLACE OF HIS USUAL SNAPPY REJOINDERS HE SEEMED TO BE TAKING IN WHAT I HAD TO SAY WITH MORE THAN HIS USUAL REFLECTIVENESS. WHEN I CALLED ON HIS SON MUHAMMAD FEW MOMENTS LATER I FOUND HIM TO BE DEFENSIVE ABOUT HIS FATHER'S ATTITUDE. HE ASCRIBED HIS POSITION  
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 04 ABU DH 02300 251117Z

TO AN UNWILLINGNESS TO TAKE ANY STEP UNTIL HE WAS ABSOLUTELY SURE OF ITS VALUE, BUT THEN SAID THAT IF HE DIDN'T LIKE SOMETHING ZAYED PROPOSED, HE SHOULD AT LEAST COME UP WITH ALTERNATIVE. MUHAMMAD WAS HOPEFUL THAT

PRESENT CAUSES OF FRICTION BETWEEN RULERS, INCLUDING DUBAI-SHARJAH BORDER SQUABBLE (MUHAMMAD WAS NOTABLY FEEBLE IN HIS DEFENSE OF DUBAI'S POSITION) WOULD BE RESOLVED "IN NEXT THREE MONTHS." I CAME AWAY WITH FEELING THAT RASHED IS COMING IN FOR PRESSURE FROM ALL SIDES, INCLUDING HIS OWN FAMILY.  
STERNER

CONFIDENTIAL

NNN

## Message Attributes

**Automatic Decaptioning:** X  
**Capture Date:** 01 JAN 1994  
**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
**Concepts:** POLITICAL STABILITY, POLITICAL SITUATION  
**Control Number:** n/a  
**Copy:** SINGLE  
**Draft Date:** 24 AUG 1976  
**Decaption Date:** 01 JAN 1960  
**Decaption Note:**  
**Disposition Action:** RELEASED  
**Disposition Approved on Date:**  
**Disposition Authority:** greeneet  
**Disposition Case Number:** n/a  
**Disposition Comment:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
**Disposition Date:** 28 MAY 2004  
**Disposition Event:**  
**Disposition History:** n/a  
**Disposition Reason:**  
**Disposition Remarks:**  
**Document Number:** 1976ABUDH02300  
**Document Source:** CORE  
**Document Unique ID:** 00  
**Drafter:** n/a  
**Enclosure:** n/a  
**Executive Order:** GS  
**Errors:** N/A  
**Film Number:** D760324-0582  
**From:** ABU DHABI  
**Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Image Path:**  
**ISecure:** 1  
**Legacy Key:** link1976/newtext/t19760827/aaaaawwq.tel  
**Line Count:** 166  
**Locator:** TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM  
**Office:** ACTION NEA  
**Original Classification:** CONFIDENTIAL  
**Original Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Original Previous Classification:** n/a  
**Original Previous Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Page Count:** 4  
**Previous Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Previous Classification:** CONFIDENTIAL  
**Previous Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Reference:** n/a  
**Review Action:** RELEASED, APPROVED  
**Review Authority:** greeneet  
**Review Comment:** n/a  
**Review Content Flags:**  
**Review Date:** 22 JUN 2004  
**Review Event:**  
**Review Exemptions:** n/a  
**Review History:** RELEASED <22 JUN 2004 by BoyleJA>; APPROVED <22 OCT 2004 by greeneet>  
**Review Markings:**

Margaret P. Grafeld  
Declassified/Released  
US Department of State  
EO Systematic Review  
04 MAY 2006

**Review Media Identifier:**  
**Review Referrals:** n/a  
**Review Release Date:** n/a  
**Review Release Event:** n/a  
**Review Transfer Date:**  
**Review Withdrawn Fields:** n/a  
**Secure:** OPEN  
**Status:** NATIVE  
**Subject:** UAE RULERS COMMENT ON UAE INTERNAL AFFAIRS  
**TAGS:** PINT, TC  
**To:** STATE  
**Type:** TE  
**Markings:** Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006